

Abraham and his sons, and Jesus Christ. Due to the effects and obstacles brought on by population growth, political shifts and religious fanaticism, our community has evolved like many others and today we have come to be known as the Syriac, Assyrian, Chaldean people.

As modern day Assyrians/Syriac Chaldean people, we do not have our own country, and those of our people that have managed to stay in the homeland, today find themselves referred to as minorities in the land of their forefathers. Our people are known to be a God fearing, peace loving people, and have contributed to Middle Eastern society in a positive way over the years. But, after years of being the target of religious fanaticism, many have fled the ancient homeland, and sought refuge in the diaspora in the hopes of providing safety and stability to their children and their families.

Today, The United States constitutes the largest population of Assyrian Christians in the diaspora. Our people first started arriving in Western New York in the late 19th century, after the Christian massacre in Diyarbakir, Turkey. We witnessed another large influx of immigrants after the Christian genocide in 1915 under the sword of the Ottoman Turks, during which nearly 1 million Armenians and about 500,000 Assyrians were killed. As a result, many of our people left Mardin, Midyat and other cities in Turkey and eventually settled in parts of New York and New Jersey. But after visiting Long Island, it was hard to resist its beautiful green pastures, and its relaxing beaches. Eventually, a small group made their way out and settled there, mainly in parts of Queens, and then later to Nassau County. These immigrants worked hard, and became prominent entrepreneurs mainly in the jewelry and garment industry, trades brought with them from the old country, back in the early 70s. They built homes, grew families and raised children who became lawyers, doctors, teachers, business owners, and upstanding members in the community. Eventually, in 1985, this growing community, now comprised of immigrants from Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, became large enough to establish a church where they could all congregate and meet regularly with other Assyrian Americans to preserve their ancient culture and practice their sacred religion. That church was named St. Peter's Syriac Orthodox Church. The community thrived and grew and after years of careful planning an opportunity arose that allowed them to finally purchase their own church. And in 2001, with the purchase of this church in Hicksville that we are gathered in today, we became permanent members of the Long Island community.

Over the years, our American born generation has begun to assimilate into American society and is proud of its American nationality. But this generation is also proud of its ancestral roots and works hard to maintain a balance between its nationality and ethnic heritage. We have always been grateful to our brave people living in our homeland knowing that we rely on them to preserve our ancient culture and language; they are the true torch bearers so to speak. God has somehow given them the strength and courage to stay rooted in their homeland, a feat many of us here could not achieve. And we have always feared that without them, our dwindling culture would undoubtedly face extinction, and our name and language that have survived for centuries would merely be something people hear about in history books. For centuries, it is our ethnic heritage and religion that have made us seem like a threat to governments in the Middle East. Some have forced us to stop speaking Aramaic in our homes with our children, forced

us to hide our crosses, and even forced us to change our names to assimilate into their societies and forget where we came from. They have even turned our century old churches to mosques, and some have even become ashes, along with our ancient archaeological sites. This cycle has been hammering away at our people to the point where they have realized the need for a safe haven, a place in their ancestral homeland that they can call their own again, where they can feel safe and protected, and be who they are. But their voices in the Middle East are being stifled, so we, their American brothers and sisters must be their voice.

We have undertaken this duty to be their voice, not only as Christians and members of this church, but also as human beings and defenders of human, God given rights. Congressman, we attempted to voice our concerns for our persecuted people outside the UN where we rallied for our people back in August. We also voiced our concerns when we wrote to your office pleading for humanitarian aid and help in stopping the barbaric acts of terrorism. And we were so grateful when you replied both to our invitation to the UN rally and reached out to meet with us here at our church today. And now that you are here, and willing to build a relationship with us, we want you to know that our people need help, they are asking for their home back. We need a safe haven for them, in our ancient ancestral land, the Nineveh plains, under the protection of the United Nations so that we can break the cycle of constant persecution threatening our existence for too long. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to acquaint you with our community today. It is our sincere hope that our voices will be heard on behalf of our persecuted community, namely the hundreds of thousands of displaced men, women, and children suffering at the hands of ISIS today.

Thank you.

#### COMMENDING MONGOLIA

#### HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Honorable President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, His Excellency Ambassador Altangerel Bulgaa, the State Great Hural, and the people of Mongolia for their commitment to the development of a stable and prospering democracy. Since establishing diplomatic relations with the United States in 1987, Mongolia has successfully conducted six presidential and six legislative elections. Additionally, Mongolia has supported international peace efforts by deploying troops to Iraq from 2003 through October 2008, and now has approximately 350 troops in Afghanistan supporting Coalition operations.

Mongolia has also achieved remarkable success over the past two decades as one of Asia's fastest growing economies. Since 2003, Mongolia's GDP has more than doubled. With one of the world's largest copper and gold mines, such as the Oyu Tolgoi, which boasts one of the biggest metallurgical and thermal coal deposits as well, Mongolia is on track to become a thriving mining center in the Asian region. Additionally, Mongolia's trade with the United States has surged in the last few years, making the United States Mongolia's third largest trading partner.

Today the relationship between our two countries continues to grow and strengthen. I

look forward to the continuing cooperation and comprehensive partnership between Mongolia and the United States based on our shared values and common strategic interests, and I have every confidence that Mongolia will continue to flourish as a relevant and established presence in the region.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES VINCENT TASA

#### HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Chief James Vincent Tasa for his 32 years of service with the Pacifica Police Department. Chief Tasa has been an exemplary leader and confidant for his colleagues and the residents of Pacifica.

Chief Tasa first joined the Pacifica Police Department as an officer in 1982. Ten years later he was promoted to the rank of Police Sergeant and in 2002 he was promoted to the rank of Police Captain. He successfully completed the POST California Law Enforcement Command College in 2007 and in 2011 he was promoted to his current position as Pacifica's Chief of Police. Though he officially retired in February of this year, he continued to serve as Chief until now to allow the City of Pacifica time to search for his replacement.

Chief Tasa has received numerous awards for his exemplary work as a law enforcement officer, including the Police Officer of the Year Award by the San Mateo County Trial Lawyers Association, the Captain's Award, and countless commendations from the community, citizens and law enforcement professionals.

Chief Tasa has approached every aspect of his work with professionalism, integrity and a refreshing sense of optimism and humor. He has earned the respect and admiration of his fellow officers and residents. I've had the honor to work with Jim over the last three years to combat human trafficking in San Mateo County. His work and collaboration with all other chiefs of police have been essential to find cures for this epidemic of modern day slavery.

During his three decades with the police department, Jim has witnessed many memorable moments. One of them is without a doubt the afternoon of August 19, 2011. He accompanied Mayor Mary Ann Nihart and other city officials on a mayor's walk on Palmetto Avenue to meet local business owners. Towards the end of the walk, they opened the door of a "flower shop" and were met by an unmistakable aroma—the flower shop was a medical marijuana dispensary. Jim had to deliver the bad news to the owner that he had a false license and therefore needed to shut his flower shop.

Jim is married to Susan Kae Tasa and they have two sons, Nick and Ryan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Jim Tasa for his outstanding service keeping the residents of Pacifica safe. His leadership and warmth will be remembered long after he moves on to the next chapter of his life.

HONORING MR. ALAN R. PARHAM

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Alan R. Parham as he receives the Labor Man of the Year Award from the Friends of Labor Committee of Laborers' Local 332. Mr. Parham is the Fund Administrator of the Laborer's International Union of North America Local 332, a local union representing thousands of construction workers in the Philadelphia area.

Mr. Parham is responsible for the administration and operation of a variety of the Laborers' funds with assets in excess of \$750 million for providing pension, health, and annuity benefits to over 12,000 people and their families. He has more than 25 years of experience working for the Benefit Fund, and been a member of the union for even longer, following in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather, who were both members of Local 332.

In addition to managing the benefit portfolio, Mr. Parham has a passion for health awareness initiatives, serving on the executive board of the Delaware Valley Health Coalition. He has led several initiatives within the union with a focus on the health of union members and their families. Under his direction, the Benefit Fund is undertaking a program to educate and encourage 50% of eligible members to get tested for prostate cancer.

I invite you and all of my colleagues to join me in commemorating Mr. Parham's accomplishment.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a community-based health care association that has served my home state of South Carolina for 35 years. South Carolina Primary Health Care Association has provided extraordinary care and has earned the appreciation and admiration of a grateful community.

South Carolina Primary Health Care Association held its initial meeting on May 3, 1979 and became incorporated in August of the same year. Its mission is to provide a coordinating structure that assures access to community-based primary, behavioral, and other health care services to every community in the state.

Today South Carolina Primary Health Care Association operates under the expressed vision, "Access to Quality Health Care for All South Carolina" and has efficiently and effectively provided such services across our state. On December 5th, they will be celebrating their 35th Anniversary of assisting the citizens of South Carolina.

Since their establishment in 1979, they have been working to increase the availability of quality health care to low-income, uninsured, isolated, vulnerable and special needs popu-

lations. They are committed to meeting the unique health care needs of these clientele and work tirelessly to reduce health disparities across the state. They have also coordinated initiatives to strengthen the local community health centers across the state.

I would also like to personally thank their CEO, Lathran Woodard, and Board Chair, Carolyn Emanuel-McClain, for their continued dedication to breaking through the barriers that often prevent the offering of high quality preventive and primary health care services to those in need.

According to the America's Health Rankings, South Carolina is ranked 43rd in the country for overall health. The United Health Foundation attributes this ranking to numerous factors including high rates of diabetes, obesity and infectious diseases. Without organizations like the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association these numbers would in all probability be much higher. The people of my home state truly benefit from this organization.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in congratulating the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association for its 35 years of compassionate health care services. As the Association continues to grow and expand much-needed services, I commend the staff and administration for its commitment to improving the quality and accessibility of health care to the people of South Carolina. I look forward to its continued service to my state.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF CLEAN OCEAN ACTION

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, November 14, 2014*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Clean Ocean Action as it celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Clean Ocean Action continues to advocate for improved ocean quality off both the New Jersey and New York coasts.

For 30 years, Clean Ocean Action has worked to protect our waterways from pollution and drilling. It conducts research, educates the public, lobbies elected officials and monitors activity to ensure laws are being followed. It not only identifies sources of pollution, it also seeks solutions and alternatives to environmentally harmful issues and activities.

Since its inception, 8 ocean dumpsites have been closed, the first Clean Ocean Zone has been established, federal legislation has been established to prohibit ocean dumping and over 5 million pieces of trash have been collected from the Jersey Shore during its biannual beach sweeps.

Currently based out of Sandy Hook in Highlands, New Jersey, Clean Ocean Action began above a hardware store in Sea Bright, New Jersey. It is led by Executive Director Cindy Zipf, who is also one of the founders of the organization. The coalition is comprised of 125 groups, including community, environmental, fishing, conservation, student, and service groups, among many others. Its members assist Clean Ocean Action staff in promoting policies and campaigns aimed at eliminating identified pollution issues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Clean Ocean Action on its 30th anniversary. The ongoing efforts of Clean Ocean Action to fulfill its mission of improving coastal water quality is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

HONORING THE LIVES OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVES PHIL CRANE AND LANE EVANS

SPEECH OF

**HON. SAM JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 13, 2014*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my good friend and former colleague, Phil Crane.

Phil was one of the first members I met when I came up here.

Later on, I had the great honor and pleasure to serve with Phil on the Ways and Means Committee.

As a fellow conservative on the Committee, I had the good fortune to work with Phil—from fighting to provide tax relief to making health care more affordable for Americans.

As someone who got to know him well, I can say that he was more than just a great public servant.

He was a great conservative leader. Phil passionately believed in freedom and free-enterprise.

Back in 1973, he helped create a group for House conservatives known as the Republican Study Committee. In fact, he served as the group's first Chairman.

Years later, I was proud to follow in his footsteps by helping to bring House conservatives together again through the Conservative Action Team, the forerunner to today's Republican Study Committee.

I am forever grateful for Phil's longstanding fight for conservative principles. And I am forever blessed by his friendship.

Mr. Speaker, above all Phil was a great American.

While he will be greatly missed, his legacy to make this country a better place lives on.

May God bless Phil and his family.

APPROVAL OF THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

SPEECH OF

**HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, November 13, 2014*

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 5682, a bill to approve the Keystone XL pipeline by circumventing the ongoing regulatory process. Rather than building infrastructure to transport dirty fossil fuels, we should be creating new jobs for our constituents by modernizing our transportation system and upgrading failing infrastructure.

Despite some recent gains, our economic recovery is not yet reaching all of our constituents. I agree with supporters of this bill from both sides of the aisle that we must not delay consideration of legislation putting our constituents back to work. House leadership